a) inserting a spigot end of a first pipe length into a bell end of a second pipe length;

b) placing a gasket within the bell end and around the spigot end, said gasket comprising a compressible body and a locking member;

c) affixing a compression gland to the bell end in a manner that compresses the gasket to form a fluid seal; wherein said locking member is positioned such that upon a force tending to move the gland relative to the spigot end, said locking member rotates and directs a portion of the force counter to the bell end.

Remarks Supporting Amendment

The above amendments are believed to comply with the requirements for amendments of Claims and the Specification, and do not introduce any new matter or disclosure. Amendments to the Specification are made to introduce consistency and antecedent basis between terms in the Specification and Claims. Terms added to the specification in the paragraph at page 9, line 26 ff are found in originally filed Claims 1, 7, and 13. Terms and descriptions added to the paragraph at page 11, line 26 ff are found in Claims 4 and 5 ("back portion"), 13 (recess-seat-meeting area, gland-meeting area), and in the Drawings. Specific locations of support for each Claim amendment are as follows:

1. Claim 1 is deleted. No support required
2. Claim 2 is amended to place it in condition as an independent claim. Support for the added language is found:
    a. In Claim 1, now deleted;
    b. In the Specification as filed at page 7, lines 8 – 15, for the preamble's recitation of the pipe joint, rather than the gasket individually;
    c. In the Specification as filed at page 9, lines 4-19 for the presence of first and second pipe portions, gland, and gasket;
    d. In the Specification as filed at page 9, line 21 – page 10, line 5, for subparagraph (a) of the claim, except that terminology has been amended for antecedent basis and consistency reasons; and,
    e. In the Specification as filed at page 11, line 26 – page 12, line 10, for subparagraph (b) of the claim.

3. Claim 3 is amended to place it in condition as an independent claim. Support for the added language is found in the same locations as those cited for Claim 2, as well as in the Specification as filed at page 13, lines 19 – 32, for reference to extractive forces. Applicant has changed the language "urged into" to "adapted to adopt" to clarify that the Claim is an apparatus claim rather than an active method claim. The language "upon compression...surface" is moved to accommodate this clarification grammatically.
4. Claims 4, 6, 7, 11 and 12 are amended to recite dependency from Claim 2 rather than Claim 1, which has been deleted. No additional support is believed to be necessary for such a dependency change. All other amendments are made for antecedent basis and consistency of language reasons, only.
5. Claims 13 and 15 are amended to consistently reflect the terminology at the Specification page 11, line 26 ff.
6. Claim 16 now recites rotation of the segment. Support is found in the Specification as filed at page 13, line 24.

Proposed Drawing Changes

"Drawings" Examiners Page 2
(Examiner's Numbering Retained)

Applicant has attached a pen-and-ink sketch showing changes to the drawings as required by the Examiner (Exhibit C). These changes are believed to be fully responsive to the issues raised on Page 2 of the Action, and are in compliance with MPEP 608.02(v). In particular, the changes are as follows:

1. In Figure 1, the illegible reference number assigned to the nut has been marked for a change to "47"
2. In Figure 4, the reference number has been added for element 46, referring to the perforations in the bell as shown.
3. With respect to drawings depicting every feature specified in the claims, the Applicant has amended the specification (see above) to match the terminology for numbered elements as used in the claims. Due to the clarification of the specification, no amendments to the

drawings are believed to be necessary regarding the compressible body. Locations of amendments are as follows:

Of the Compressible Body:

a. Spigot-facing surface – shown as reference numeral 4, clarified by amendment to Specification, page 9, line 26
b. Recess seat-facing surface – shown as reference numeral 9, clarified by amendment to Specification, page 9, line 27
c. Gland-facing surface – shown as reference numeral 7, clarified by amendment to Specification, page 9, line 26

Of the Locking Member

a. Back portion – shown in Figure 7 as new reference numeral 100 in the region of reference numeral 3 & 17, clarified by amendment to Specification, page 9, line 26
b. Gland meeting area – shown as new reference numeral 101 in the region of reference numeral 3, clarified by amendment to Specification, page 11, line 29
c. Seat meeting area – shown as new reference numeral 102 in the region of reference numeral 17, clarified by amendment to Specification, page 11, line 31

4. Formal drawings incorporating the recited amendments will be provided prior to or with the payment of the issue fee.
5. Applicant has attached a pen-and-ink sketch as Exhibit C showing changes to the drawings as required by the Examiner. These changes are believed to be fully responsive to the issues raised on Page 2 of the Action, and are in compliance with MPEP 608.02(v).

Responses to Examiner's Remarks in Detailed Action

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Drawings
Examiner's Page 2

Applicant has proposed drawing changes by way of pen & ink drawing, above, as required by the examiner. Approval of these changes is respectfully requested, and is believed to satisfy all objections and remarks of the Examiner with respect to the drawings.

Specification

Examiner's Page 3, Paragraph 6

The Examiner objected to lack of antecedent support in the specification to terms in the Claims. Applicant has amended the Specification (above) to provide antecedent basis for the use of the following terms originally recited in the Claims:

- spigot-facing surface – now at page 9, line 26 replacement paragraph
- recess seat-facing surface – now at page 9, line 26 replacement paragraph
- gland-facing surface – now at page 9, line 26 replacement paragraph
- back portion – now at page 11, line 26 and page 15, line 26 replacement paragraphs
- gland-meeting area – now at page 11, line 26 replacement paragraph
- seat meeting area – now at page 11, line 26 replacement paragraph

Claim Objections

Examiner's Page 3, Paragraph 7

The Examiner objected to the lack of a transitional phrase "wherein" as a formality in Claim 1. Claim 1 has been deleted, obviating this objection.

Rejections

Substantive Remarks and Argument

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested. The Application stands rejected as to all claims, 1 through 16, on the basis of 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over Percebois et al, U.S. Patent No. 5,297,826 ("Percebois"). Based on the following analysis and in light of the above amendments, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejections.

Claim Rejections, § 112
Examiner's Page 4, Paragraphs 8 and 9
Examiner's Organizational Structure Retained

Applicant respectfully submits that it has corrected any § 112 deficiencies by the amendments to the claims, above. In order to assist the Examiner, Applicant addresses the rejections of the Examiner at Paragraph 9, page 4 of the amendment under the headings and structure used by the Examiner.

Re: claim 1. The Examiner cited a lack of clarity regarding whether claim one was directed to the combination of a restraining gasket and a first and second pipe portion, or to only the subcombination of the restraining gasket. Applicant has deleted claim 1. All claims that formerly depended from claim 1 are now independent claims.

Re: claim 1. The Examiner cited the use of the term "exposed tooth" rather than the antecedently used "exposable tooth." Applicant has deleted claim 1.

Re: claim 2. The Examiner cites a lack of antecedent basis for "said compression gland" and "such pressures." Applicant has amended Claim 2 to place it in the form of an independent claim; the text added by amendment is believed to provide proper antecedent basis for the term "said compression gland." Applicant has further amended claim 2 by deleting the term "pressures" as the last word of the claim and inserting in its place the term "force," for which antecedent basis is found in line 9 of the amended claim.

Re: claim 3. The Examiner cites a lack of antecedent basis for the term "such pressures" at lines 2 and 3 from the bottom of the claim. Applicant has amended Claim 3 at the stated location by deleting the term "such pressures" and inserting in its place the phrase "an extraction force", and changing the last instance of the term "pressures" to "force".

Re: claims 7 and 11. The Examiner cites a lack of antecedent basis for the term "said locking members." By amendment, Claim 7 now depends from Claim 2, as amended.

Applicant has amended the reference in Claims 7 to recite "locking member has" rather than "locking members have," and in Claim 11 to recite "member" rather than "members", solely to match grammatically the numerosity of the antecedent basis provided for the term "locking member" in Claim 2. The numerosity of the reference in Claims 7 and 11 continues to cover the entire scope of numerosity as recited in Claim 2; namely, that the singular includes the plural.

Re: claim 7. The Examiner cites a lack of antecedent basis for the phrase "said recess seat surface." Applicant has amended Claim 7 by adding the term "facing" to the phrase, such that it reads "said recess seat-facing surface" as is supported by Claim 2, from which Claim 7 now depends.

Re: claim 9. The Examiner cites a lack of antecedent basis for the phrase "said second assembled pipe portion" in the claim as filed. Applicant finds no such reference in Claim 9, but does note the reference in Claim 10, to which Applicant assumes the Examiner's rejection relates. Applicant has amended Claim 10 by deleting the term "assembled," such that the phrase in issue is now "said second pipe portion," which is supported by Claim 2 from which Claim 10 ultimately depends (via claims 9 and 7).

Re: claims 13 and 15. The Examiner cites a lack of antecedent basis for the term "said recess meeting area." Applicant has amended both claims by replacing the term "recess" with the term "seat" to match the antecedent phrase "seat meeting area" as present in Claim 13 at line 7 of the claim.

Claim Rejections, § 102

Examiner's Page 5, Paragraphs 10 and 11

Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections levied by the Examiner on the basis of 35 U.S.C. § 102 are not supported by the prior art cited by the Examiner, and must be withdrawn.

As Amended All Elements are not Found in the Cited Reference:

The standard that applies for maintaining any rejection under section 102 is set forth by M.P.E.P. section 2131, which provides:

> The claim is anticipated **only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found**, either expressly or inherently described in a single prior art reference. Verdegaal Brothers v. union oil Co. of California, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 U.S.P.Q.2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). **"the identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the... claim."** Richardson v. Suzuki motor Co., 868 F.2d 1226, 1236,9 U.S.P.Q.2d 1913,19200 (Fed. Cir. 1989). The elements must be arranged as required by the claim, but this is not an *ipsissimis verbis* test, i.e., identity of terminology is not required. In re Bond, 9100 F.2d 831, 15 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1566 (Fed. Cir. 1990). (Emphasis added.)

The Manual therefore provides that a claim is not to be rejected as anticipated unless the "anticipating reference" includes both (1) all identical elements and (2) complete detail and identical arrangement of all of those elements. In this case, both references fail to anticipate the claims as amended, as more fully explained below:

The Examiner rejected Claims 1 through 16 over Percebois, et al, which shows a restraining gasket for use in a stuffing box assembly. Applicant deviates from the Examiner's organizational structure of discussion; but addresses the rejection over Percebois for all Claims on the basis of the absence of a prima facie case against each Claim. Because no prima facie case is made out, each discrete point raised by the Examiner need not be individually addressed.

Claim 1.

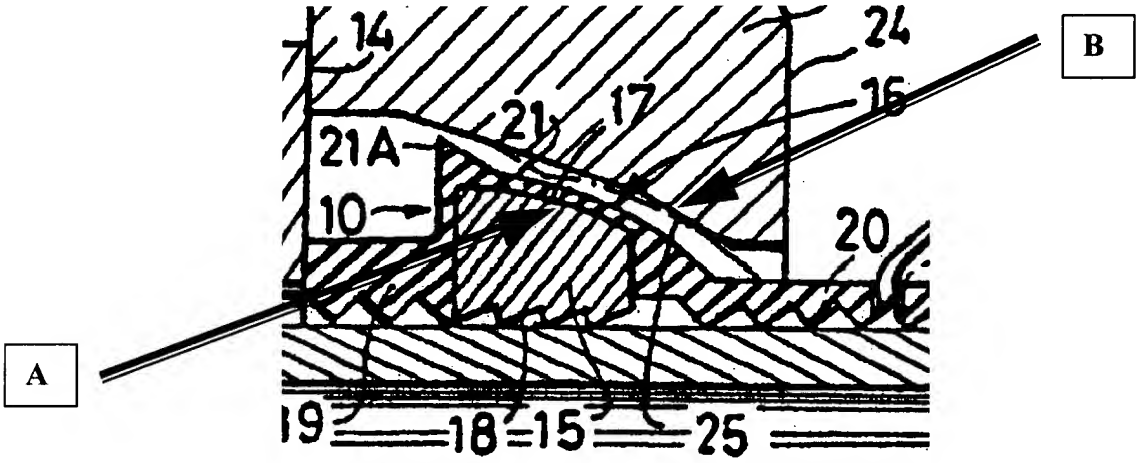
The Applicant has deleted Claim 1.

Claim 2 – Percebois Does Not Show or Support Pivoting.

Amendments have been made to Claim 2 to place it in independent form; no new matter is believed to have been added. Under the standard recited from MPEP 2131, the burden is on the Examiner to show that the reference cited as anticipating prior art contains each and every element and limitation of the claims. Claim 2, as originally filed and as amended, recites that Applicant's "...locking member is adapted to pivot in response to a force tending to separate the first pipe portion from the second pipe portion...". Figure 1 of Percebois does not show any pivoting action or capability. In fact, the description in

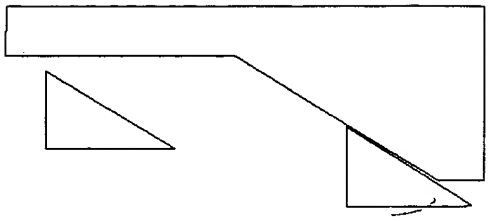
Percebois would not be interpreted by any person of ordinary skill in the art to include suggest, or even allow, any pivoting action whatsoever.

Reference to Figure 1 of Percebois, as cited by the Examiner, is instructive; Applicant reproduces a close-up of the relationship between the locking segment (Percebois 15, Applicant 1) as shown in Percebois Figure 1 below, with additional reference lines for clarity of discussion:



Reference line B points to the inside curved surface of Percebois' counterflange 11. Reference line A points to the outer convex face 17 of Percebois' locking member (referred to as an "insert 15" by Percebois). As can be seen from the above image, upon extractive movement of the male end from the female end (e.g., movement of the inserted pipe toward the right), Percebois' locking member will also move right until A contacts B. It is evident that the convex shape of A is complimentary to the concave shape of B, meaning that A and B will mate. No opportunity is provided for pivoting of the locking member.

Notably, those in the art will understand that Percebois is depicting a known locking mechanism for push-on joints is the "sliding wedge." In a sliding wedge configuration, the locking segment is configured with a surface that slidably mates with a longitudinally resistive surface, as shown below:



In the above image, as the triangle, shown first as positioned to the far left, moves to the right, its slanted face will mate with the conversely slanted face of the large polygon. Once such face to face contact is made, the triangle will not pivot, but will be urged downward for every unit of movement made toward the right. This type of sliding wedge movement is commonly known in the pipes and appurtenances industry. Because of this industry background, persons reasonably skilled in the art would interpret Percebois' Figure 1 as involving just such a mechanism. This understanding is demonstrated correct by Percebois' discussion of the "backward" movement of the insert at Column 3, lines 50 – 66 and Column 4, lines 23 - 34.

Moreover, reference to Percebois' Figure 1 itself indicates that pivoting is not *possible* in this relationship. The tight match between the configuration of A and B will ensure that pivoting does not occur. Percebois notes at Column 6, lines 2 through 9, that inserts 15 press against the counterflange "without play" (line 4).

Because Applicant's Claim 2 recites a pivoting action, while Percebois neither shows nor appears capable of supporting a pivoting action, the Examiner has not shown a prima facie case in which all elements of Applicant's claim are found in the prior art. The rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 3: Percebois does not show or support transfer of a portion of pressures to the gland and a second portion to the bell.

Amendments have been made to Claim 3 to place it in independent form; no new matter is believed to have been added. Under the standard recited from MPEP 2131, the burden is on the Examiner to show that the reference cited as anticipating prior art contains each

and every element and limitation of the claims. Claim 3, as originally filed and as amended, recites that Applicant's "locking member is adapted to ... transfer a portion of an extraction force to said gland and a second portion of such force to the second pipe portion." Percebois, Figure 1 neither demonstrates such a divisive transfer of extractive forces, nor could the structure taught produce such a division in any foreseeable event.

Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner misreads Percebois, Figure 1, in a manner that cannot be reconciled with Percebois' description. The Examiner refers to Percebois 2 as a "compression gland," while Percebois refers to item 2 as a "female end" (e.g., the bell, which is the "second pipe portion" in Applicant's description). See, Percebois 2:23-24. Applicant has reproduced an image of Figure 1 with reference lines for the Examiner's convenience. This distinction is significant in respect of Applicant's Claim 3, because Claim 3 recites a distribution of an extraction force between the gland and the second pipe portion (e.g., the gland and the bell). Properly understood, Percebois places the locking segment 15 immediately between the gland 11 and the first (male) pipe portion. Extractive forces on the male pipe draw the locking segment to the right in the figure. If the prior art locking segment is engaged with the male end, the segment moves to the right, as well, which brings it into contact with only the gland 11. Extractive forces do not and cannot distribute a portion of the extractive force to the female pipe.

Because Applicant's Claim 3 recites a division of extractive forces, while Percebois shows only direct transfer of all forces to the gland, the Examiner has not shown a prima facie case in which all elements of Applicant's claim are found in the prior art. The rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 4: Dependent from Claim 2

Claim 5: Dependent from Claim 4

Claims 6-12 – Dependent from Claim 2

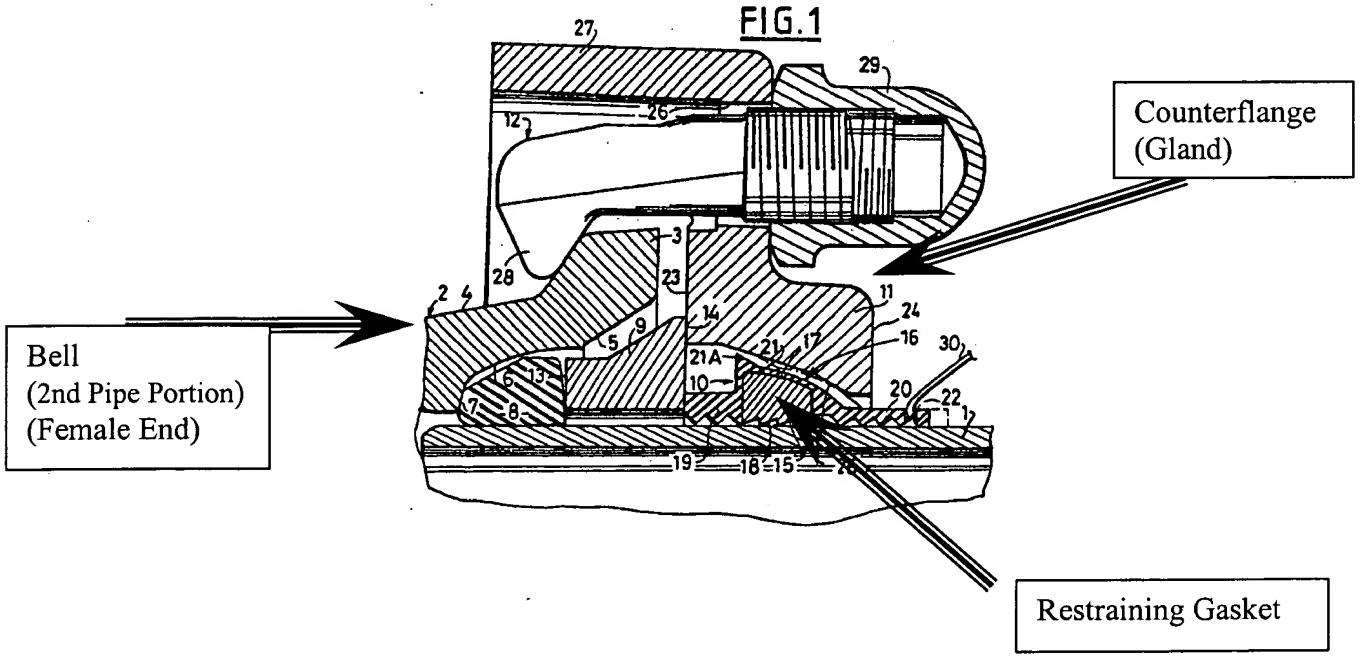
Because Claims 4, 5, and 6-12 are dependent from Claim 2, directly or by intervening claims, the arguments related above with respect to the prima facie case of unpatentability against Claim 2 apply with equal force. Because a prima facie case has

not been made out, Applicant need not present arguments affirmatively demonstrating patentability; Applicant reserves all additional arguments that may be available with respect to patentable distinctions among Percebois, and any of Claims 2, 4, 5, 6-12, and any intervening claims.

Claim 13-15 – Percebois does not show a gasket and segment adapted to fit within the female end of a pipe.

Claim 13 recites that the restraining gasket, along with its embedded locking segment, is "adapted to fit within a bell end of a second pipe length." (e.g., the segment is in the bell of the female end) The Examiner's assertion that Percebois demonstrates a gasket "adapted to fit within a bell end of a second pipe length 2," (Office Action at p.7, line 9) is not in accord with Figure 1 of Percebois, upon which the Examiner relies. Figure 1 is reproduced below for clarity. Percebois defines pipe length 2 as the female end, or bell, of the juncture. See, Percebois 2:24-25. Percebois's item 11 is a counter-flange, and not part of the bell at all. See Percebois, at Abstract and 3:10-30. As is evident by viewing the reproduction of Figure 1 below, the retaining gasket of Percebois fits within the counterflange (termed "gland" by Applicant); it does not assemble within Percebois' bell end 2.

FIG.1



Percebois thus does not show the same arrangement of elements as recited in the claim. Percebois therefore fails the requirement of MPEP 2131 that the "elements must be arranged as required by the claim... In re Bond...." The rejection accordingly fails to set forth a defensible prima facie case of unpatentability, and must be withdrawn.

Claim 16 – locking segment is not in Bell End.

The argument presented with respect to Claim 13 and its dependent claims applies with equal force to Claim 16. Claim 16 recites as a step, "placing a gasket within the bell end...." As noted above, Percebois places the gasket and locking segment within the gland, and not within the bell end at all. The rejection accordingly fails to set forth a defensible prima facie case of unpatentability, and must be withdrawn.

Fees

Applicant has attached hereto a check in the amount of $568.00 for the fees for two additional independent claims, in light of the fact that Claims 2 and 3 are now styled as independent, and for an extension fee of two months.

Applicant has diligently sought to comply with all requirements and to correct all informalities and objections. The Application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and early approval is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan W. Johnson,
Reg. No. 44173
205-521-8369

CERTIFICATE OF EXPRESS MAILING

I hereby certify that the enclosed cover letter and Response to Office Action, Terminal Disclaimer, Drawings, and Notice of Recordation regarding application Ser. No. 09/590,586, with the appropriate fee are being deposited with the "Express Mail" service of the United States Postal Service in an envelope marked EL609566605US addressed to Commissioner of Patent and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231 on February 20, 2002.

Nathan W. Johnson
Registration No. 44,173

Date: February 20, 2002

AUTHORIZATION TO CHARGE DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

If, after processing the enclosed checks, any charges, fees, or sums due remain unpaid in connection with this correspondence, I hereby authorize the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks to charge all such remaining fees, charges, and other sums due to Deposit Account Number 50-0954.

Nathan W. Johnson, Esq.
Authorized User

Exhibit A
Markup Copies of Replacement Paragraphs for Specification

A1

As is depicted in Figure 2, the locking segment **1** of the present invention is optimally constructed to fit within a gasket **2** that is configured to fit within any standard mechanical joint without necessitating changes to the configuration of the bell, gland, or spigot. Gasket **2** is an elastomeric or other resilient or deformable material, such as those in the art will understand may be used in the practice of a mechanical joint. The preferred configuration of the gasket is an annular ring with a radially inner spigot-facing surface **4** that is adapted to be in contact with spigot **10**, a gland-facing surface **7**, which is adapted to be compressed by a gland or compression ring **11**, and a recess-seat facing surface **9** that is adapted to contact the inner surface of bell **12**. Although these surfaces are readily distinguishable in the drawings and as discussed herein, it will be apparent that any gasket intended for use in a mechanical joint will have such surfaces; as the gasket is compressed, it will necessarily be compressed by spigot **10**, recess seat **43**, and gland **11**. Accordingly, even an O-ring with circular cross section would possess all three surfaces, though the transition among surfaces may not be as readily apparent in the uncompressed state as in the configuration shown. Most preferably, gasket **2** conforms to all of the requirements of ANSI/AWWA C111/A21.11-95. In particular, for any given spigot **10**, gasket **2** tends to have a slightly smaller inner diameter than the outer diameter of the spigot **10**. Accordingly, placement of gasket **2** over the exterior of spigot **10** typically will require exertion of force to expand gasket **2** to fit around spigot **10**.

Page 11, Line 26ff

In a preferred configuration as detailed in Figure 2, segment **1** in cross section resembles a truncated, preferably asymmetrical, acute triangle, having a toothed edge **16**, with teeth **6** extending therefrom in the arcuate pattern as above discussed; and a back portion **100**, which in the shown embodiment has a lower surface **13**, extending radially and axially along a slope toward a gland-meeting area **101**, which is shown in the figures as a general region in the vicinity of a rear-elbow **3**. Rear-elbow **3** is adapted to be in a close proximity to gland **11** when the mechanical joint is assembled. Radially outwardly of both elbow **3** and toothed edge **16**, back portion **100** of segment **1** possesses a recess-seat meeting area **102**, shown in the drawings as a region with an upper protrusion **17**, which together with elbow **3** defines a back surface **14** thereinbetween, and together with the leading tooth **6** of toothed edge **16**, defines a frontal slope **15** thereinbetween. In this embodiment, elbow **3** is in close proximity to gland **11** when the joint is assembled, and upper protrusion **17** is in close proximity to annular gasket recess seat **43** of the bell. Most preferably the point of closest proximity between elbow **3** and facing surface **7** is no further from the juncture of recess-meeting surface **9** and facing surface **7** than one half the length of facing surface **7**. Furthermore, the inventor prefers that elbow **3** not be immediately adjacent to the juncture of facing surface **7** and spigot **10**. A greater volume of elastomeric material of gasket **2** exists between recess-meeting surface **9** (particularly shoulder **8**) and segment **1** than is present between elbow **3** and gland **11**, or in the area defined by spigot **10**, lower surface **13**, and elbow **3**. Upon compression of gasket **2** by assembly of gland **11** to bell **12**, elbow **3** is driven axially inwardly toward bell **12**.

A2

Page 15, Line 26ff

Yet another embodiment practices segment **1** as contacting bell **12** and gland **11** near the intersection of gasket recess seat **43** and gland **11**. To effect such a close proximity, curve **70** (or elbow **3** and upper protrusion **17**) will define a relatively small area that may be termed a back portion **100**. Furthermore, the segment **1** may be constructed and positioned in such a manner that this back portion **100** intrudes within any gap that is present at the intersection of gasket recess seat **43** and gland **11** as shown in Figure 7. The configuration of this area and the manner of intrusion may be orchestrated such that the end of lip **71** of gland **11** acts as a fulcrum, and the intruding portion acts against gasket recess seat **43** to prevent over-rotation of segment **1**.

A3

Exhibit B
Claims in Clean Form

2. (Amended) A pipe joint comprising a first pipe portion, a second pipe portion, a compression gland, and a restraining gasket between the first pipe portion and the second pipe portion, said gasket further comprising:

a) a compressible body having a spigot-facing surface, a recess seat-facing surface, and a gland-facing surface; and

b) a locking member, said member having a tooth and a back portion at least partially embedded within the compressible body, wherein at least a portion of the tooth is positioned to engage the male pipe portion, wherein said locking member is adapted to pivot in response to a force tending to separate the first pipe portion from the second pipe portion, and wherein said locking member is adapted to resist movement between said first pipe portion and said compression gland in the event of such force.

3. (Amended) A pipe joint comprising a first pipe portion, a second pipe portion, and a restraining gasket, said gasket further comprising:

a) a compressible body having a spigot-facing surface, a recess seat-facing surface, and a gland-facing surface; and

b) a locking member, said member having a tooth and a back portion at least partially embedded within the compressible body, wherein at least a portion of the tooth is positioned to engage the male pipe portion,

wherein said locking member is adapted to adopt a secured relationship with the first pipe portion upon compression of a gland against said gland-facing surface and wherein further said locking member is adapted to non-compressibly resist movement of said first pipe portion relative to said gland by transferring a portion of an extractive force to said gland and a second portion of such force to the second pipe portion.

4. (Amended) A pipe joint as in Claim 2, wherein said back portion is disposed in proximity to said gland-facing surface and to said second pipe portion.

5. (Amended) A pipe joint as in claim 4, wherein said back portion is adapted to interpose between a lip of said gland and the second pipe portion.

6. (Amended) A pipe joint as in Claim 2, said locking member having a facing elbow disposed in proximity to said gland-facing surface.

7. (Amended) A pipe joint as in Claim 2, wherein said locking member has a facing elbow, and an upper protrusion; said facing elbow being disposed in proximity to said gland-facing surface, and said upper protrusion being disposed in proximity to said recess seat-facing surface.

8. (Amended) A pipe joint as in Claim 7, wherein said facing elbow and said upper protrusion are points on a curve.

9. (Amended) A pipe joint as in Claim 7, wherein said facing elbow is adapted to resistively contact said compression gland.

10. (Amended) A pipe joint as in Claim 9, wherein said upper protrusion is adapted to resistively contact said second pipe portion.

11. (Amended) A pipe joint as in Claim 2, further comprising a plurality of density regions, wherein said regions are adapted to influence the movement of said locking member.

12. (Amended) A pipe joint as in Claim 2, wherein said compressible body comprises a ring mutably severed along its circumference.

13. (Amended) A pipe joint for securing the ends of intersected assembled pipe portions, said gasket comprising a compressible body adapted to encircle a spigot end of a first pipe length and adapted to fit within a bell end of a second pipe length; said gasket having a spigot-facing surface, a gland-facing surface, and a

recess seat surface; said compressible body having embedded therein a locking member, said locking member having a toothed edge, a gland-meeting area, and a seat-meeting area; said toothed edge disposed in proximity to said spigot facing surface; said gland-facing area disposed in proximity to said gland-facing surface, and said recess-seat meeting area disposed in proximity to said recess seat surface.

14. (Amended) A pipe joint as in Claim 12, wherein said gland-meeting area comprises a tooth.

15. (Amended) A pipe joint as in Claim 13, wherein said recess-seat meeting area comprises a tooth.

16. (Amended) A method for preventing the disengagement of pipe lengths comprising:

a) inserting a spigot end of a first pipe length into a bell end of a second pipe length;

b) placing a gasket within the bell end and around the spigot end, said gasket comprising a compressible body and a locking member;

c) affixing a compression gland to the bell end in a manner that compresses the gasket to form a fluid seal; wherein said locking member is positioned such that upon a force tending to move the gland relative to the spigot end, said locking member rotates and directs a portion of the force counter to the bell end.